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60 A survey on young people who left the Syracuse schools during the school year 1959- without having graduated is presented. An initial perspective of the school dropout was sought. This included who he is, his behavior in school, his job experience after leaving school, relationship of delinquency to the dropout, and family background and welfare experience. Sources used were: school records, New York State employment records, County Welfare Department records, work permits filed with the board of education, Armed Forces Examination Station records, the Registry of Juvenile Offenders, and the Identification Bureau of the Police Department. The dropout rate in Syracuse is small (54 of every 1,000 students enrolled). The mean IQ of the dropouts studied was 92.8, indicating that they were capable of doing the academic work required. Only 27% of the dropouts studied had any contact with law-enforcing agencies, and the majority of the offenses committed were not serious, indicating that the dropout does not automatically become a social problem in terms of repeated delinquencies and antisocial acts. Members of the group, as a whole, were found to be 16 or 17 years old upon leaving school; most left during the first three years of high school. Almost four-fifths of them were at least one year retarded in school work.

More than 40% of the families of the dropouts had received public welfare assistance at some time. A majority of the dropouts came from relatively poor families: This fact is supported by evidence that most of the parents had low prestige and low-skilled jobs.

Boys were more likely to leave school before graduation than girls; boys were older than girls when leaving school; and boys were more retarded in grade level than girls.

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SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
NEW YORK STATE
DIVISION FOR YOUTH

THE SCHOOL DROPOUT PROBLEM:

SYRACUSE

S. M. MILLER
CAROLYN COMINGS
BETTY SALEEM

THE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CENTER

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THE SCHOOL DROPOUT PROBLEM:

SYRACUSE

S. M. MILLER
CAROLYN COMINGS
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This report was published by the New York State Division For Youth, Alexander Aldrich, Director, and reissued by the Syracuse University Youth Development Center. The Youth Development Center acknowledges financial and other assistance by the New York State Division For Youth but assumes full responsibility for the contents of this report.

The Syracuse University Youth Development Center is committed to a program of research related to the problems of young people in the city. Emphasis is placed on youth from the lower socio-economic strata and on the social institutions that make up the control systems for these youth. Established in 1958 under a continuing grant from the Ford Foundation, the Center is a joint university-community endeavor. Syracuse and Onondaga County provide the primary laboratory for research and demonstration programs and a partnership in developing these programs. Syracuse University provides the interdisciplinary philosophy and personnel, with ideas, resources, and talent drawn from the university's schools and colleges.

FOREWORD

The State of New York recognizes its five million young people as its most important asset for the future. We have taken a hard look at the problems facing youth today and have initiated a variety of programs to help them meet these problems.

A major effort is being made by the Division for Youth and by the Departments of Education and Labor to help youths who have dropped out of school and to reduce the number who will leave school before graduation.

The youth and work programs are truly investments in the future and aim to reduce the incidence of juvenile delinquency and of school dropouts, while providing our young people with a better start in their working lives.

The Division for Youth in cooperation with other state and local agencies is conducting intensive research into the problem of the school dropout. The information gathered from these studies will make it possible to arrive at an effective program of preventive and constructive assistance to the youths who leave school before graduation. This is a report of one phase of its findings and will be followed by others.

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This study was conceived by the New York State Division for Youth and was carried out in close collaboration with the Division, which is directed by Alexander Aldrich. Dr. Arthur Pearl, Director of Research, and the staff of the Division for Youth provided the basic guide-lines of the research and were helpful at each stage of the investigation. We have appreciated their extensive aid and have enjoyed the opportunity of working closely with the Division for Youth. This study would not have appeared without their initiative, guidance and critical forebearance.

INTRODUCTION

The concern with school dropouts increases as their percentage in the population decreases. This paradox makes sense, however, for the disadvantage of early school leaving grows as educational qualifications are increasingly introduced into hiring practices. The dropout of today and tomorrow is in a much worse economic position than the dropout of yesteryear, when low education was prevalent throughout the population. Today, in a society where two-thirds of the young graduate from high school, the dropout status is disadvantaging indeed.

The growing concern for the dropout in a high-education society is now beginning to be buttressed by some reliable information about him. This information is basic to programs aimed at reducing the number of dropouts and improving the opportunities for those who have left school. Since dropouts have only recently been singled out for attention, data on them from schools and other sources are inadequate. More intensive study is necessary, but the basis for further investigation is in the organization of information now available.

In the following report, we have attempted to utilize available record data, although we recognize some severe limitations and major gaps. Nevertheless, the information collected and briefly analyzed in this report represents important data not previously available.

Six main sources were used in collecting the study materials. Data were obtained from the Syracuse Board of Education, the New York State Employment Service, the Syracuse Armed Forces Examination Station, the Onondaga County Department of Public Welfare, the Central Registry of Juvenile Offenders, and the Syracuse Police Department.

The data point up a number of issues which are not always clear in discussions of dropouts. For example, the problem of school dropouts is not restricted to boys. Although we frequently talk as though only males leave school before graduation, 45 per cent of the Syracuse dropouts were girls. In some communities the percentage of girl dropouts is even higher.

Most girls and boys prior to and after dropping out of school are *not* arrested by the police. Most school leavers are not mentally retarded nor of low intelligence. A sizeable number of dropouts come from "good" neighborhoods and have parents in white-color occupations. Less than two-thirds of dropouts' families can be considered as large. A background of broken homes does not characterize all dropouts. Employed dropouts are concentrated in a few industries.

Perhaps the most important inference from the data is that we should avoid speaking of "*the* dropout", implying that dropouts are very much alike. There are important differences in the prior and later experience of boy and girl dropouts; race makes a difference as do the varied family situations which these youth face. There are many different kinds or *types* of dropouts and it is crucial to recognize these types in developing programs aimed at the reduction of the number of dropouts and in the improving of their chances. No one program can deal with all dropouts; their outlooks, experiences and prospects are too varied for measures to be uniformly effective. Rather, selective programs for carefully defined groups or types are necessary.

Dropouts represent a waste in presentday society. They are concentrated in jobs of low productivity; many are likely to have difficulties in social adjustment with resulting strain to themselves as well as to the community.

The present report is a social accounting which can only deal with limited aspects of dropouts in the fourth largest city of New York. It analyzes dropouts as a group rather than tracing the experiences of individual dropouts. Coupled with studies of other cities, we can begin to see the magnitude and characteristics of the problem of dropouts and trace out community variations in the nature of the dropout process and experience. It is perhaps in the comparative community analysis of dropouts that we shall learn the most, and we have been fortunate in the present study to be able to tie it in with the studies of the New York State Division for Youth in Rochester and other cities of the State. The close working of the Division and the Syracuse University Youth Development Center has aided this beginning step in the systematic cumulation of the basic data needed for social planning and action.

PART I

THE SCHOOL AND THE DROPOUT

A total of 565 students dropped out of Syracuse schools during the school year 1959-1960 and did not receive any further education. Of these, 23 attended parochial schools, and 542 were in public schools. Excluding the 18 public school dropouts in the seventh grade yields a dropout rate of 5.4 per cent for grades eight through twelve in the public schools of Syracuse. The Rochester dropout rate for 1960-1961 was almost exactly the same.[1]

table 1

PUBLIC SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1960

Dropouts, grades 8-12	524
Enrollment, grades 8-12	9,616
Dropout rate	5.4%

NOTE: These data are of one year only and cannot be compared with dropout rates for a given school population throughout its school lifetime.

Sex and Age

Although discussions of dropouts typically center about the boys who leave school, 45 per cent of the Syracuse dropouts were girls. Thus, while boys predominated among dropouts, they were only a slight majority of all dropouts. This finding of 10 per cent more boy than girl dropouts is consistent with the Rochester study (where 56 per cent of dropouts were boys) and with other studies. Because boy and girl dropouts have different patterns in many ways, most of the analyses of this report attempt to study separately the male and female dropouts.

[1] The Rochester figure is taken from *The School Dropout Problem in Major Cities of New York State: Rochester—Part I* (Albany: New York State Division for Youth, 1962), p. 9.

Both the Syracuse and Rochester rates are based on the total number of dropouts in a given year. They differ from the more usually cited dropout rates which are based on the number of dropouts from a particular school population (e.g. those in the fifth grade in 1952) during the subsequent school years. Since the latter rates cover a number of years for a delimited population, they are, of course, considerably higher than the dropout rate for all students in any given year.

table 2

SEX OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1960

Sex	Number	Per Cent
Boys	313	55
Girls	252	45
TOTAL	565	100

A second major characteristic of the dropout is that of age. In New York State, the age when school attendance is no longer mandatory is 16. A few students do withdraw from school before the legal age. One reason is that a youth whose 16th birthday occurs shortly after the beginning of the school year may not begin the new school session; a second reason is that some girls who become pregnant before 16 may leave or be excluded from school for medical reasons.

table 3

AGE OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1960

Age	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
15 or under	12	4	13	5	25	4
16	124	39	125	50	249	44
17	90	29	78	31	168	30
18	63	20	24	9	87	15
19	15	5	9	4	24	4
20	6	2	3	1	9	2
21	1	.5	—	—	1	.5
Not ascertained	2	.5	—	—	2	.5
TOTAL	313	100	252	100	565	100

NOTE: "Age" refers to age at last birthday before leaving school.

Do most dropouts leave school as soon as they can? Almost half (48 per cent) of the dropouts in our study did so if we use dropping out before the age of 17 as an indicator of early separation from school.

On the other hand, a slight majority of students did not leave school as soon as they legally could. Girls were somewhat more likely to leave at an early age than boys; 55 per cent of the girls left school before age

17 compared to 43 per cent of the boys (Table 3). The likelihood of boy dropouts staying longer in school than girls is also sharply shown by grouping each sex by whether they were over or under age 18 at the time of dropout, as shown in Table 4. A difference is revealed that is statistically significant. While 27 per cent of the boys were 18 or over when they left, only half as many girls, or 14 per cent were.

table 4

GROUPED AGE CATEGORIES OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1960

Age	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Under 18	226	73	216	86	442	79
18 or over	85	27	36	14	121	21
TOTAL	311	100	252	100	563	100

$X^2 = 14.04$
$df = 1$
$P < .01$

NOTES: "Age" refers to age at last birthday before leaving school. Table excludes two boys for whom age at dropout was not ascertained.

The fact that boys were generally older than girls when they left school should not obscure the fact that the bulk of both boy and girl dropouts were young when they ended their education. Of the girls, 86 per cent were under 18, while 73 per cent of the boys were below this age (Table 4).

School Grade of Dropouts

One out of every six dropouts ended his education before entering high school, as shown in Table 5 ("grade attained by dropout" refers to the grade the student was in when he left school or the grade he would have been in had he returned after summer vacation). While only 3 per cent of the dropouts occurred in the seventh grade, 13 per cent took place in the eighth year. Boys and girls did not differ in this respect.

table 5

GRADE ATTAINED BY SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1960

Grade Attained by Dropout	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
7	11	4	8	3	19	3
8	41	13	30	12	71	12
9	71	23	49	19	120	21
10	73	23	54	21	127	22
11	69	22	74	30	143	25
12	33	10	29	12	62	11
Special class	10	3	6	2	16	3
Not ascertained	5	2	2	1	7	1
TOTAL	313	100	252	100	565	100

A little more than four of ten dropouts were in the ninth or tenth grade when their schooling ended. Between 20 per cent and 25 per cent of all school leaving occurred in each of the grades between ninth and eleventh, so that almost 70 per cent of the dropouts were in these three grade levels.

Considering the eleventh and twelfth grade levels together as the advanced high school years, we find that more than one of three dropouts (36 per cent) were in these higher grades. Especially indicative of the importance of late leaving is the fact that twelfth grade dropouts were 11 per cent of all school leavers.

The one large sex difference in the grade distribution of dropouts occurred in the eleventh grade, where 30 per cent of girls and 22 per cent of boys left school. Totalling eleventh and twelfth grade dropouts for boys and girls separately reveals that 32 per cent of boy dropouts and 42 per cent of girl dropouts were in these higher grades when they dropped out. (This finding is not statistically significant.) Relating this result to that of Table 3 shows that although boys have a higher percentage of older dropouts than do girls, there is a higher percentage of girl dropouts in advanced grades. This finding is due to sex differences in school retardation.

School Retardation

Combining data on age and school grade permits calculation of school level in relation to the usual age standards for various grades.[2]

table 6

RELATIVE SCHOOL STANDING OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS BY YEARS AND SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1960

Relative School Standing	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Advanced one year	—	—	7	3	7	1
Average	32	10	58	23	90	16
Retarded 1 year	77	25	70	28	147	26
Retarded 2 years	105	34	65	26	170	30
Retarded 3 years	63	20	34	13	97	17
Retarded 4 years	15	5	9	3	24	4
Retarded 5 years	4	1	2	1	6	1
Not ascertained	17	5	7	3	24	5
TOTAL	313	100	252	100	565	100

The most striking finding is that more than one of seven dropouts were not retarded in their grade level at the time of their departure from school. The sex difference is very great: one of four girls (26 per cent) was advanced one year or was in a grade level appropriate for her age, while only one of ten boys was in an appropriate grade level and none was advanced. Table 7 demonstrates that these differences are statistically significant. These figures again evidence the better school performance of girl dropouts.

[2] The exact number of years of retardation was difficult to calculate for those who were born in November, December, or January. The cut-off date for entrance into kindergarten lies somewhere in this area, and some students may have been allowed to enter almost a year earlier than others whose birthdates fell at approximately the same time. If students had transferred from another school system, it was not possible to learn the age at which they had begun school. The number of these cases is small and reasonable approximations were made.

table 7

RELATIVE SCHOOL STANDING OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS BY GROUPED YEARS AND BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1960

Relative School Standing	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Average or advanced 1 year	32	11	65	27	97	18
1 or 2 years retarded	182	61	135	55	317	59
3-5 years retarded	82	28	45	18	127	23
TOTAL	296	100	245	100	541	100

$X^2 = 24.37$
$df = 2$
$P < .01$

NOTE: Excludes seventeen boys and seven girls for whom number of years retarded was not ascertained.

If we add those with only one year grade retardation to the group that is not retarded (advanced one year and average grade level), this category of no or minimal grade retardation contains 43 per cent of all dropouts (54 per cent of the girls; 35 per cent of the boys), as shown in table 6.

Despite these results, the data (See table 7) show a pervasive degree of school retardation. More than one of four boy dropouts (28 per cent) and one of six girl dropouts (19 per cent) were retarded three years or more. In addition, over half of the dropouts were retarded one or two years (61 per cent of the boys and 55 per cent of the girls).

This admixture of results indicates that school retardation is frequent but not universal among dropouts. While 23 per cent of dropouts were severely retarded (three grades or more) in their school level, an almost equal figure (18 per cent), as we have pointed out, were not retarded at all. In the case of girls, those advanced or at a normal grade level (26 per cent) outnumbered those severely retarded in grade attainment (19 per cent).

IQ Scores

The ease with which an intelligence quotient can be cited should not obscure the difficulties in interpreting results on intelligience tests. The inadequacy of such tests for measuring the intelligence of working-class students has been abundantly pointed out in the literature.[3] It is important

[3] Allison Davis, *Social-Class Influences Upon Learning* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1948); Frank Riessman, *The Culturally Deprived Child* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962); Patricia Sexton, *Education and Income* (New York: Viking Press, 1961).

to recognize the limitations of intelligence tests for their results have been interpreted to show that those who do poorly in school cannot do better because of limited intelligence. Today, however, it is increasingly recognized that facility with school work affects performance on intelligence tests. Particularly with a population such as ours, the IQ score cannot be taken at face value.

Further difficulties arise from the particular circumstances of IQ testing in Syracuse. Various tests were employed; the most frequently reported results were from the California Test of Mental Maturity. Students were tested at different times, so there is no conformity in the age for which IQ is reported. The total number of dropouts for whom scores were obtainable was 236, less than half of all dropouts. With these limitations in mind, we proceed to analyze the data on IQ of our dropout population.

table 8

IQ TEST SCORES OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

IQ Test Score	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
60-69	4	3	3	3	7	3
70-79	13	10	12	12	25	11
80-89	33	25	25	24	58	25
90-99	42	32	38	37	80	34
100-109	26	19	18	17	44	18
110-121	15	11	7	7	22	9
TOTAL	133	100	103	100	236	100

NOTE: Data available on only 236 of the total dropout population. The tests were taken at various points in the school careers of the dropouts, and several kinds of intelligence tests were employed.

The mean score of measured intelligence for dropouts was 92.8, with a range from 60 to 121. Six of ten dropouts (61 per cent) had IQ's of 90 or above. No differences by sex appear for this grouping, although a higher percentage of boys than girls are in the above-100 bracket (30 per cent to 24 per cent). Slightly more than one of eight dropouts were in the very low measured-intelligence range (under 80); including those between 80 and 89 measured intelligence, almost four of ten dropouts (39 per cent) were in the under-90 IQ category. No sex differences emerged.

Again, we have a picture of considerable variation. As commonly noted, a sizeable percentage of dropouts are at the low IQ levels. Frequently ignored, however, are the considerable number, as in Syracuse, of school dropouts with average or above average IQ's.

Health Handicap

School records were scanned to see if they bore any information on health handicaps. The total number of students whose health was covered was 175, well under one half of the total. Of this number, 11—or 6 per cent—were found to have a major handicap; 6 were boys, 5 girls.

Dropout Date

School dropouts were decidedly bunched at the end of the school year, during the intervening summer, and the beginning of the new school year. Students who did not begin the new school year were classified as having left school in September, 1959. These dropouts, together with those who left during the months of September and the previous June, accounted for 28 per cent of all dropouts. In October, 1959, another 9 per cent left school and 11 per cent left in November. These three periods encompassed almost one-half of all dropouts. Differences between boys and girls were very small.

The end of the first semester and the beginning of the second were also high dropout periods: 10 per cent of all dropouts occurred in January 1960, 9 per cent in February, and 12 per cent in March. Nearly a third of all dropouts left school during this three-month period. The beginning of a school term thus seems to be a crucial period.

table 9

MONTH DURING WHICH SCHOOL DROPOUT OCCURRED, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1960

Month of Dropout	Number	Per Cent
September	158	28
October	48	9
November	63	11
December	30	5
January	58	10
February	53	9
March	65	12
April	27	5
May	52	9
June	11	2
TOTAL	565	100

Reason for Leaving School

At the time of this survey, the schools were not making an intensive effort to record the explanation of each dropout. Discovering the reason for early school leaving is extremely difficult at best. Multiple factors may be involved, and the same explanation may have different meaning for different people. Twelve categories of reasons for leaving school have been employed: eight primarily involve action of the student while three involve school action, as in suspension or exclusion.

table 10

REASON FOR SCHOOL DROPOUT, BY SEX OF DROPOUT, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1960

Reason	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Work	87	28	75	30	162	29
Age	42	13	60	24	102	18
Left	29	9	13	5	42	7
Did not return	6	2	19	7	25	4
Married	2	1	13	5	15	3
Service	37	12	—	—	37	7
Help at home	2	1	5	2	7	1
Ill	—	—	1	1	1	1
Dropped	19	6	17	6	36	6
Suspended	25	8	9	4	34	6
Excluded	9	3	3	1	12	2
No reason	55	17	37	15	92	16
TOTAL	313	100	252	100	565	100

The most common reason for leaving school was to go to work: three out of every ten dropouts offered this explanation. The next most common reason was "age"; this explanation was offered by a higher percentage of girls (24 per cent) than of boys (13 per cent). The only other reason which secured more than 10 per cent response was that of entering the armed services. This was cited by 12 per cent of the boys.[4]

[4] In the case of the "Service" category, intention is indicated rather than acceptance of the boy by the service. Other record material showed that 17 girls (7 per cent) were probably dropped for reasons of pregnancy although only 3 girls were listed as excluded on medical grounds.

PART II

WORK EXPERIENCE AND THE DROPOUT

The work experience of dropouts is affected by the time of year when they leave school, the continuity of their participation in the labor market, and the kind of work they do. A variety of information exists in the records of the schools, the New York State Employment Service, and the armed services. Since the history of experiences is different for each dropout, the following analysis is cross-sectional, covering dropouts as a group rather than sequentially following the job careers of individuals.

Work Permits

The Board of Education issues work permits to persons under 18 years of age in order to ensure employer compliance with child labor regulations.[1] Different types of permits are issued for (1) part-time or vacation jobs of 14-15 year-olds; (2) farm jobs for ages 14-15 (vacation or part-time jobs only); (3) part-time or vacation jobs for ages 16-17; and (4) full-time jobs for 16-17 year-olds.

table 11

NUMBER OF WORK PERMITS OBTAINED BY 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1957-1961

Number of Work Permits	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
None	231	74	184	73	415	74
One or more permits	82	26	68	27	150	26
TOTAL	313	100	252	100	565	100
One permit	41	50	39	58	80	53
Two permits	26	32	20	29	46	31
Three or more permits	15	18	9	13	24	16

[1] Norman R. Roth, *An Analysis of Work Permit Issuance and Work-Study Programs in Onondaga County, N. Y.* (Syracuse, N. Y.: Syracuse University Youth Development Center, 1959).

[3] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *1960 Census of Population, Alphabetical Index of Occupations and Industries* (rev. ed.), (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1960).

If a youth changes jobs frequently before he is 18 he might have several permits of one or more types, thus obscuring any sequential patterning. A further difficulty is that work permits may not have been secured for each job, thus the total number of permits does not equal the total number of jobs held by persons under 18. A typical case of omission is that of a youth starting a part-time job with a permit and not obtaining a new permit when his job became full time.

Twenty-six per cent of the dropouts obtained at least one work permit,[2] and this percentage was the same for both boys and girls. A few more boys than girls, however, obtained three or more permits.

Three-fifths of the permits were issued for full-time employment. Somewhat more part-time or vacation work permits were issued to boys than to girls in the 14-15 age bracket. On the other hand, a slightly higher percentage of these permits for 16-17 year olds were issued to girls than to boys.

table 12

TYPES OF WORK PERMITS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1957-1961

Age and Type of Permit	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
(14-15) Part time or vacation	30	21	17	16	47	19
(14-15) Farm	3	2	1	1	4	1
(16-17) Part time or vacation	24	17	22	21	46	18
(16-17) Full time	86	59	67	62	153	61
Not ascertained	2	1	—	—	2	1
TOTAL	145	100	107	100	252	100

NOTE: This table has a different total than Table 11 because the latter pertains to the number of dropouts holding work permits. The present table is an analysis of all work permits issued.

Types of Jobs

Table 13 is a detailed listing of the types of jobs involved in all permits obtained by dropouts. These occupations form the most complete accounting of all kinds of work done by dropouts in the early stages of their participation in the work world. The jobs are presented separately for boys and girls and in order of highest frequency; the frequency figures are reported in two columns, one totaling all permits and the other referring only to the last permit the dropout obtained after he left school.

[2] Since three-quarters of the dropouts were under 18 when they discontinued school, under-reporting of jobs has obviously occurred.

table 13

JOB TYPES COVERED BY WORK PERMITS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1957-1961

Boys			Girls		
Permits All	Permits Last Post-Dropout	Job Type	Permits All	Permits Last Post-Dropout	Job Type
18	2	Pinboy	19	11	Sales and clerking
17	10	Stockboy	11	7	Waitress
14	6	Laborer (incl. construction)	11	3	Kitchen help
12	9	Helper (factory, store)	8	7	Helper (factory, store)
11	4	Errand boy, delivery	8	3	Tray girl
8	3	Ticket taker, usher	6	4	Clerk, countergirl
7	3	Bus boy	5	4	Cleaning, housekeeper, hospital, nursing home
7	3	Kitchen help			
7	7	Dishwasher	5	3	Sorter, packer, wrapper
5	4	Sales & clerking	5	4	Laundry
4	—	Farm	5	2	Clerical
3	1	Gas station attendant	4	3	Factory, machine operator
3	1	Ride operator	3	—	Sales (only)
3	3	Clerk, counterman	2	1	Office work
2	—	Laundry	2	1	Telephone operator
2	2	Factory, machine operator	2	—	Saleswoman (door)
2	2	Maintenance	2	1	Cashier
2	1	Porter	2	1	Stock girl
2	—	Stationmaster, routeboy	2	—	Farm
2	1	Parking lot attendant	1	1	Typist
2	—	Salesman (door)	1	—	Private maid
1	—	Counselor, boy's club	1	—	Bus girl
1	1	Sorter, packer, wrapper	1	—	Hotel maid
1	1	Presser	1	—	Nurse's aid
1	1	Barber apprentice			
1	1	Mechanic's helper	107	56	TOTAL
1	—	Waiter			
1	1	Elevator operator			
1	1	Shoe shine boy			
4	1	Not ascertained			
145	69	TOTAL			

NOTES: "Last Post-Dropout" refers to the last permit issued to a dropout after leaving school and before attaining age 18.
"All Permits" refers to permits issued both before and after leaving school.

Boy dropouts were most likely to start their working experience with jobs such as pinboy and stockboy. The next three most popular jobs were laborer, helper, and errand boy. All five job types are heavily physical, and involve considerable activity. By the time the boys applied for their last post-dropout permit, the pinboy job had dropped drastically in importance and stockboy, helper, and dishwasher jobs were relatively more frequent.

Girl dropouts were likely to start work in sales and clerking positions, as waitresses, or as kitchen helpers. The jobs of tray girls and helper (in factory or store) were the next most frequent jobs. The sharpest drop in the last post-dropout job was in kitchen help.

Classifying these occupations by the U.S. Census code groupings in the Alphabetical Index[3] facilitates comparison of jobs held by boys and girls.

table 14

OCCUPATIONS LISTED IN WORK PERMITS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1957-1961

Occupations	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Professional	1	1	—	—	1	1
Clerical	—	—	12	11	12	4
Sales	6	4	24	22	30	12
Crafts	1	1	—	—	1	1
Operatives	37	25	22	21	59	23
Private household	—	—	1	1	1	1
Service	61	42	44	41	105	41
Farm laborers	4	3	2	2	6	2
Laborers	31	21	2	2	33	13
Not ascertained	4	3	—	—	4	2
TOTAL PERMITS ISSUED	145	100	107	100	252	100

When jobs are grouped into conventional "white collar-blue collar" categories, only 5 per cent of the boys are in white collar jobs, compared with 33 per cent of the girls. This difference is due to the concentration of girls in sales and, to a lesser extent, in clerical occupations. Another major difference is that 21 percent of the boys are laborers, while only 2 per cent of the girls are so classified. The largest occupational grouping for both boys and girls is that of service, which accounts for about 40 per cent of both sexes. A higher percentage of boys than girls are listed as operatives (25 per cent to 21 per cent).

Three occupations attract over 80 per cent of boys and girls. For boys, these occupations are service, operatives, and laborers; in the girls' case, they are service, sales, and operatives.

Types of Industries

A detailed listing of industries which the dropouts entered may prove useful in planning job opportunities. The list for boys shows bowling alleys as the top entering industry. At a second level are variety stores, hospitals, theatres, restaurants, bakeries, and groceries. Together, these industries account for more than one-third of the work permits. Great diversity exists for the rest of the permits. The distribution of the last post-dropout permits evidences the decline in importance of pinboy jobs, as bowling alleys sharply decline as an employer. Variety, food, and department stores head up the list of post-dropout industries for boys.

Variety stores, which involve sales and clerking jobs, and hospitals, which involve tray work and cleaning, head the list of industries employing girl dropouts. They are followed by the apparel and accessories industries. These industries cover almost half of the jobs held by girls, with the remaining half scattered in schools, department stores, laundries, snack bars, food packing and the like. Variety stores and hospitals were the most important employers of girl dropouts in the last job for which a permit was issued since leaving school; apparel and accessories manufacturers and department stores tied for third place. These four industries provided 60 per cent of the post-dropout jobs for girls. Boys' employers were more widely dispersed.

table 15

WORK PERMITS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS BY INDUSTRY AND BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1957-1961

Boys			Girls		
Permits			Permits		
All	Last Post-Dropout	Industry	All	Last Post-Dropout	Industry
18	2	Bowling alleys	25	10	Variety stores
9	6	Variety stores	16	10	Hospitals
7	4	Hospitals	9	7	Manufacturing: clothing and accessories
7	3	Theatres	8	—	Schools
6	4	Restaurants	7	7	Department stores
6	5	Bakeries	3	3	Laundry, drycleaning
6	5	Groceries	3	2	Snack bars
5	5	Department stores	3	—	Meat markets
5	2	Gas stations, auto repair	3	—	Food packing
5	3	Optics & dental supply	2	—	Farms
4	1	Laundry	2	1	Hotels
4	—	Farms	2	2	Manufacturing: doors, caskets, trim
4	3	Hotels	2	—	Newspapers, publications
3	1	Cafeterias	2	1	Insurance
3	—	Snack bars	1	—	Nursing home
3	3	Manufacturing: doors, caskets, trim, library equipment	1	—	Private home
3	1	Amusement parks	1	1	Restaurant
3	—	State Fair	1	1	Cafeterias
3	—	Schools	1	1	Drug store
2	—	Cemetery	1	—	Bakery
2	—	Produce stands	1	—	Produce stand
2	1	Shoe stores	1	—	Stationery store
2	—	Delivery service	1	1	Clothing store
2	1	Parking lots	1	1	Furniture store
2	1	Landscaping	1	—	Bumper supply, plumber
2	1	Construction	1	1	Pottery, ceramics
2	1	Foundations & concrete	1	1	Fiber glass, paper manufacturing
2	1	Pottery & ceramics	1	1	Stamping
2	1	Manufacturing: clothing, accessories	1	1	Process: tobacco, peanuts, soft drinks
2	2	Process: tobacco, peanuts, soft drinks	1	—	Bowling alley, sports
2	2	Social clubs	1	—	State Fair
2	—	Newspapers, publications	1	1	Trade corporation
2	1	Telegraph	1	1	Telephone company
1	1	Barber	1	1	Florist
1	1	Auto, plumbing supply	—	1	Not ascertained
1	1	Trucking			
1	1	Roofing	107	56	TOTAL
1	1	Fiber glass, paper manufacturing			
1	1	Electronics			
1	1	Parks			
6	2	Not ascertained			
145	69	TOTAL			

NOTES: "Last Post-Dropout" refers to the last permit issued to a dropout after leaving school and before attaining age 18.
"All Permits" refers to permits issued both before and after leaving school.

table 16

WORK PERMITS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS BY CENSUS INDUSTRIAL CATEGORIES AND BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1957-1961

Industries	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Agriculture	6	4	2	2	8	3
Construction	5	3	—	—	5	2
Manufacturing	18	13	20	19	38	15
Transportation, communication, public utilities	7	5	1	1	8	3
Wholesale and retail trade	49	34	47	44	96	38
Finance, insurance and real estate	2	1	2	2	4	2
Business, repair	—	—	1	1	1	1
Personal services	8	6	7	6	15	6
Entertainment	31	21	1	1	32	13
Professional	9	6	25	23	34	13
Public administration	4	3	1	1	5	2
Not ascertained	6	4	—	—	6	2
TOTAL PERMITS ISSUED	145	100	107	100	252	100

To permit industrial standardization, the industries of Table 15 have been reclassified into the U.S. Census Code on Industries.[4] Almost half of the girls (44 per cent) are in wholesale and retail trade. This is also the largest single male employer, although a smaller percentage (34 per cent) of boys are employed in it. The next highest category for girls is professional, employing 23 per cent; for boys, this is an unimportant category (6 per cent), while entertainment takes second place, employing 21 per cent. Surprisingly, girls have a higher percentage in the third most important industry, manufacturing (19 per cent), than boys (13 per cent).

Girls are more concentrated in employment than boys: three industries (wholesale and retail trade, professional, and manufacturing) employ almost nine out of every ten girls (86 per cent) while three industries (wholesale and retail trade, entertainment, and manufacturing) employ almost seven of ten boys (68 per cent).

[4] *Ibid*

Other Work Permit Data

Table 17 presents information on when dropouts received their work permits. Girls and boys did not differ in the percentage of work permits that were issued prior to their leaving school (using May, 1959, as the cut-off date).

table 17

DATE OF ISSUANCE OF WORK PERMITS TO 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1956-1962

Date Permit Issued	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Sept., 1956—May, 1957	1	1	1	1	2	1
June, 1957—Aug., 1957	1	1	2	2	3	1
Sept., 1957—May, 1958	11	8	8	7	19	8
June, 1958—Aug., 1958	9	6	4	4	13	5
Sept., 1958—May, 1959	10	7	9	8	19	8
June, 1959—Aug., 1959	16	11	7	7	23	9
Sept., 1959—May, 1960	41	28	38	35	79	31
June, 1960—Aug., 1960	10	7	12	11	22	9
Sept., 1960—May, 1961	27	19	17	16	44	17
June, 1961—Aug., 1961	6	4	6	6	12	5
Sept., 1961—May, 1962	8	5	3	3	11	4
Not ascertained	5	3	—	—	5	2
TOTAL PERMITS ISSUED	145	100	107	100	252	100

table 18

NUMBER OF DAYS PER WEEK WORKED BY 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS ON JOBS COVERED BY WORK PERMITS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1957-1961

Days Per Week Worked	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
7 days	2	1	—	—	2	1
6 or 5½ days	35	24	35	33	70	28
5 days (regular work week)*	64	44	51	47	115	45
4 days	4	3	2	2	6	2
3 days	6	4	4	4	10	4
Weekends only	9	6	1	1	10	4
1 day	1	1	3	3	4	2
Not ascertained	24	17	11	10	35	14
TOTAL PERMITS ISSUED	145	100	107	100	252	100

* This category is slightly misleading, since it includes two boys and eight girls, who worked in the school cafeteria five days a week, but for only approximately ten minutes each day.

Most work permits were issued to both boy and girl dropouts for jobs involving at least 5 days of work per week. Weekend and part-time work (less than 5 days a week) were a minor part of the job experience of dropout youth as depicted by work permits.

More detailed information on the types of work arrangements is in Table 19. More boys than girls were found on second and third shifts. A higher percentage of permits were issued to girls for part-time jobs (32 per cent) than were issued to boys (21 per cent); the main difference is that girls had more "after school" jobs than boys.[5]

[5] Table 19 shows more full time jobs than Table 12. It must be remembered, however, that full-time jobs in Table 19 include vacation jobs, which are full time during the summer. In Table 12 these vacation jobs are grouped with part-time and farm jobs.

table 19

TYPE OF WORK DAY OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS ON JOBS COVERED BY WORK PERMITS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1957-1961

Type of Work Day	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Part Time:						
Very short hours (1 hour or less)	5	3	8	7	13	5
During day	7	5	4	4	11	4
After school	14	10	21	20	35	14
At night	5	3	1	1	6	2
Full Time:						
First shift (Beginning between 6:00-12:00 a.m. and ending between 4:00-6:30 p.m.)	70	48	44	41	114	45
Second shift (approximately 3:00-12:00 p.m.)	19	13	5	5	24	10
Third shift (approximately 12:00 p.m.-8:00 a.m.)	1	1	—	—	1	1
Combined shifts	4	3	9	8	13	5
Not ascertained	20	14	15	14	35	14
TOTAL PERMITS ISSUED	145	100	107	100	252	100

Registration with the State Employment Service

All registrations made by our group of dropouts with the New York State Employment Service prior to the survey date of Spring 1962, were checked. Some information was available on 199 dropouts; on certain detailed items, data were available for only 161 of these youth, since the registration cards for the remaining 38 could not be located.[6]

[6] Eleven of the dropout applicants—seven boys and four girls—were handicapped and needed special help in job placement. These youths are included in the tabulations presented here.

table 20

NEW YORK STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE APPLICATIONS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1961

Status	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Applicant	122	39	77	31	199	35
Non-applicant	191	61	175	69	366	65
TOTAL	313	100	252	100	565	100

$X^2 = 4.34$
$df = 1$
$P < .05$

Slightly more than one-third of the dropouts (35 per cent) applied at the NYSES at some time.[7] That over a third sought help at the NYSES seems to reflect the fact that the schools and the Employment Service work together on the counseling of dropouts. A higher percentage of boys (39 per cent) than of girls (31 per cent) utilized the service; this difference is statistically significant at the .05 level (i.e., the difference could occur by chance in only five of 100 situations) but not at the .01 level (i.e., the difference could occur by chance in only one of 100 situations). The somewhat greater importance of the NYSES to boys than to girls may be due to the higher percentage of boys who enter the labor force.[8]

[7] The work done by the NYSES with dropouts is not fully reported here. All of the 1959-1960 dropouts who later returned to school were excluded from this study. More than three-quarters of these "returnees" were registered with the NYSES, and 60 per cent of those registered were placed on jobs. Had the returnees been included in the present report, the utilization of the NYSES would have proved to be greater than here indicated.

[8] An analysis of a sample of our dropout group shows that two years after leaving school, 7.3 per cent of single males were not in the labor force and that all married males were in the labor force. On the other hand, 11.4 per cent of unmarried females and 14.7 per cent of married females were out of the labor force. See Kenneth L. Baldwin *et al.*, "The Syracuse Dropout—Two Years Later" (unpublished Master's thesis, School of Social Work, Syracuse University, 1962), p. 133.

NYSES Occupational Classification

The type of occupational classification assigned to the applicant helps to show how the dropout was guided toward fitting into the job market.

The boys were classified over a wider range of jobs than girls. Slightly more than half of the girls (53 per cent) were in the clerical and sales category while the largest male category, semi-skilled manual, contained not much more than a third of all boys (37 per cent). For the girls, clerical and sales, service (33 per cent) and semi-skilled (13 per cent) included all but one per cent of all girls. For the boys, clerical and sales (22 per cent) was the most important classification after semi-skilled manual; unskilled manual, skilled manual, and service each had between 12 per cent and 14 per cent of the boys. In contrast with the three categories of the girls, 98 per cent of males were classified into five categories.

table 21

NEW YORK STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1961

Occupational Classification	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Professional	2	2	—	—	2	1
Clerical, sales	27	22	41	53	68	34
Service	15	12	25	33	40	20
Skilled	16	13	—	—	16	8
Semi-skilled	45	37	10	13	55	28
Unskilled	17	14	—	—	17	8
Not ascertained	—	—	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	122	100	77	100	199	100

Grouping occupational categories into white-collar and blue-collar classifications shows more sharply the career difference between boys and girls. Only a quarter of the boys (24 per cent) were classified as in white-collar occupations, compared with 54 per cent of the girls (Table 22). The difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.

table 22

NEW YORK STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE BLUE COLLAR-WHITE COLLAR OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS, 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1961

Type	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Professional, clerical, sales	29	24	41	54	70	35
Skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled	78	64	10	13	88	45
Service	15	12	25	33	40	20
TOTAL	122	100	76	100	198	100

$X^2 = 48.92$
$df = 2$
$P < .01$

NOTE: Excludes one girl for whom occupational classification was not ascertained.

table 23

NEW YORK STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE CONTACTS PER 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUT APPLICANT, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1961

Contacts	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
1-2	38	38	33	54	71	44
3-6	35	35	22	36	57	35
7 or more	27	27	6	10	33	21
TOTAL	100	100	61	100	161	100

$X^2 = 7.68$
$df = 2$
$P < .05$

NOTE: Excludes 38 dropouts registered with NYSES for whom data were unavailable.

Activity with the State Employment Service

Boys and girls also differed in the number of contacts made with the NYSES. While 46 per cent of the girls paid three or more visits to NYSES, 62 per cent of the boys had appeared at least three times. In the high-frequency category (seven or more contacts), the difference between boys and girls is especially great: only 10 per cent of the girl dropouts were in the higher contact group, compared with 27 per cent of the boys.

The difference between boys and girls in quantity of service is also reflected in qualitative information on the kind of services provided. The NYSES procedures are divided into four categories: counseling, testing, referral, and placement. Data were available for only 161 of the 199 applicants.

table 24

NEW YORK STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROCEDURES USED BY 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1961

Procedures	NYSES Applicants			Study Total
	Boys N = 100 (1) %	Girls N = 61 (2) %	Total N = 161 (3) %	N = 565 (4) %
Counseling	74	62	70	20
Testing	35	31	34	10
Referral	56	53	55	16
Placement	29	30	29	8

NOTES: Columns (1) through (3) exclude 38 dropouts registered with NYSES for whom data were unavailable.

The percentages are of the indicated populations that have received certain services, e.g., 53 per cent of girls have received referrals from the State Employment Service.

A high percentage of both boys and girls had more than routine contacts with the NYSES: 74 per cent of the boys and 62 per cent of the girls received counseling. Boys and girls did not differ with respect to frequency of testing, referral, and placement, despite the higher percentage of boys who were counseled. That one-third of the dropouts were tested indicates some of the difficulties in assessing their possibilities. A positive note, however, is the ability of the NYSES to place 29 per cent of the dropouts who utilized their services.[7] These and other data on Syracuse dropouts[8] suggest that the NYSES is not the most frequent channel for securing a job.

[9] These figures understate NYSES activities for dropouts since the same youth might secure multiple services from the agency. For example, while 47 dropouts were placed, 77 placements were made with this group. Additional data will be found in the Appendix.

[10] Baldwin *et al.*, p. 146.

table 25

NEW YORK STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE ACTIVITY STATUS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, SYRACUSE, N. Y., MARCH, 1962

Status	Number	Per Cent
Active	37	23
Inactive	116	72
Not ascertained	8	5
TOTAL	161	100

NOTE: Excludes 38 dropouts registered with NYSES for whom data were unavailable.

Registrants are considered inactive if they have not appeared at the NYSES for several months. About one-quarter of the 161 dropouts were classified as active in March, 1962, roughly two years after leaving school; differences between boys and girls were small. The NYSES has continuing importance for dropouts.

The Armed Services

Since the Armed Services represent employment and further training opportunities for boys, an effort was made to find out how many boys actually entered the Service. As pointed out earlier, school records did not distinguish instances where a boy had been accepted from those where a boy indicated an interest in entering one of the military services. Age qualifications, along with mental and physical fitness tests, exclude many who intend to join; others may never actually apply despite an early interest.

The Syracuse Armed Forces Examination Station cooperated with the survey and checked the original list of dropout names for 1959-60 against its file. In some cases a Service record was reported through the County Welfare Department, the NYSES, or the Syracuse Police Department.

School records indicated that 37 dropouts in the study year 1959-60 had the intention of joining the Armed Services. Since the Armed Forces Examination Station file dated only from January, 1961, it was not possible to ascertain how many of these 37 entered before 1961. Only seven of these were listed at the Examination Station.

The total group of dropouts for whom a Service record was *definitely* reported (that is, not including those reported only by the school) was 34, or 11 per cent, of the 313 boys in the sample. As most of the boys known to have joined the Service did not enter until 1961, they were considered as part of the labor market group of dropouts subsequent to leaving school and are included in the survey. The further training they might obtain in the Service is considered on-the-job training since they are paid for this work.

PART III

DELINQUENCY AND THE DROPOUT

An easy equation between the dropout and the delinquent frequently appears. It is clear that not all delinquents are dropouts or likely dropouts. Despite the validity of this statement, it could still be true that most dropouts are delinquents. The data in this chapter, which are drawn from the Syracuse Central Registry of Juvenile Offenders and the Syracuse Police Department, shed light on this view. Our information refers only to officially reported delinquency, not to all delinquency.

Apprehensions of Pre-16 Year Olds

The Central Registry has established an index for juveniles who have contact with law enforcement agencies.[1] The age period for which this agency lists apprehensions is from 7 through 15 (i.e., have not yet reached the age of 16). The Registry's earliest information is for the year 1957. Those dropouts who were 18 or older in 1959-60 would have been above the Registry's age maximum of 15 in 1957, and consequently any delinquency of their early teens would not be listed. Offenses for the period 1957-59 were not completely recorded. The following data, therefore, slightly underestimate the delinquencies of the dropout prior to age 16.

One out of every five dropouts was known to the Central Registry. More than twice as many boys as girls had been apprehended: 27 per cent of the boys were listed in the Registry and only 11 per cent of the girls. Most dropouts had not been involved with law enforcement officers before the age of 16 to the extent of being apprehended.

table 26

LISTING OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS IN CENTRAL REGISTRY OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1957-1960

Record Listing	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Listed	85	27	28	11	113	20
Not listed	228	73	224	89	425	80
TOTAL	313	100	252	100	565	100

$X^2 = 22.46$
$df = 1$
$P < .01$

[1] Lee J. Cary and Robert H. Hardt, *The Central Registry* (Syracuse, N. Y.: Syracuse University Youth Development Center, 1961).

Recidivism is not pronounced in this age group. Almost half of the dropout offenders (43 per cent) were listed only once. Boys were somewhat more likely than girls to be listed more than once: 59 per cent of boys and 50 per cent of girls had two or more listings. Using four or more listings as an indicator of high recidivism reveals that boys were decidedly more likely than girls to be repeaters. Only 4 per cent of the girls were in the category of four or more listings, compared to 19 per cent of the boys.

table 27

FREQUENCY OF LISTINGS PER 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUT IN CENTRAL REGISTRY OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1957-1960

Listings	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
1	35	41	14	50	49	43
2	23	27	7	25	30	27
3	11	13	6	21	17	15
4 or more	16	19	1	4	17	15
TOTAL	85	100	28	100	113	100

The total number of apprehensions has been considered separately from the number of individuals apprehended. Here the greater delinquency of boy dropouts than of girl dropouts is again demonstrated. Four of five apprehensions involved boys, contrasted with only one of five for girls. This dropout delinquency ratio of four-to-one is slightly lower than the general delinquency sex ratio, which runs between five-to-one and seven-to-one in different locales.[2]

Further, the offenses of the boys were for more serious types of law infringements. Serious offenses made up 41 percent of all offenses committed by boys and 32 per cent of those committed by girls. While property offenses were the most common serious offenses among boys and girls, they made up 32 per cent of all male offenses and only 14 per cent of all female offenses. The concentration of male serious offenses in the property category means that girls' serious offenses were more diverse than boys'. Sex offenses and improper behavior were more important among girls (16 per cent) than among boys (3 per cent).

[2] Robert H. Hardt, *A Delinquency Profile of Syracuse and Onondaga County, N. Y. 1959-60* (Syracuse, N. Y.: Syracuse University Youth Development Center, 1961), p. 12.

The less serious offenses showed different patterns among boys and girls. The category of ungovernable, truant, etc., was the most common among girls (33 per cent of all offenses); it was also the most frequent less-serious offense among boys, but at a considerably lower level (19 per cent). Malicious mischief was important among boys (19 per cent) but not among girls (6 per cent). Disorderly conduct was twice as common among girls as boys (15 per cent to 7 per cent). There was no sex difference in Children's Court violations (13 per cent to 14 per cent).

table 28

TYPES OF OFFENSES OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, RECORDED WITH CENTRAL REGISTRY OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1957-1960

Types of Offenses	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Serious						
Against the person (assault)	7	3	1	2	8	3
Property (theft, burglary, robbery)	65	32	7	14	72	28
Sex offenses	4	2	4	8	8	3
Illegal use of weapons	1	1	—	—	1	.5
Unlawful entry	5	2	—	—	5	2
Improper behavior	3	1	4	8	7	3
Less serious						
Disorderly conduct	14	7	8	15	22	9
Malicious mischief	39	19	3	6	42	16
Ungovernable, etc.	40	19	17	33	57	22
Children's court violations, etc.	27	13	7	14	34	13
Not ascertained	2	1	—	—	2	.5
TOTAL	207	100	51	100	258	100

Police Department records were made available on a limited basis. They deal with youngsters who are 16 or older; youth in the age bracket 16 through 20 may be tried as youthful offenders if the Court permits. Since information on those treated as youthful offenders was not available to the researchers, the following data somewhat understate the extent of the less serious offenses of these youth.

By March, 1962, slightly more than one of nine dropouts (12 per cent) of the year 1959-60 had been arrested by the police. The sex difference is great: 4 per cent of the girls and 19 per cent of the boys had been arrested. This contrast is vividly shown by the fact that 85 per cent of all arrests were of boys. Despite the higher figure of boys than of girls, the overall conclusion is that most dropouts are not arrested.

table 29

RECORD OF POLICE ARRESTS AFTER AGE 16, 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Offenses	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Arrests	58	19	12	5	70	12
No arrests	255	81	240	95	495	88
TOTAL	313	100	252	100	565	100

$X^2 = 24.37$
$df = 1$
$P < .01$

NOTE: Records checked as of March, 1962.

Not only are boys more likely to be arrested than girls, but they are more likely to be repeaters. While of girls arrested, three-quarters of them had been arrested only once, less than two-thirds (64 per cent) of boys who had been arrested were in this category. The biggest difference among boy and girl arrestees is in the percentage who had been arrested twice; more than twice as many boys (19 per cent) than girls (8 per cent) were in the two-arrest category. Although 12 per cent of boys and no girls were in the highest-frequency category of four or more arrests, girls and boys had exactly the same percentage of arrests (17 per cent) in the three-or-more category.

The bulk of offenses (65 per cent) involved less-serious crimes. Boys showed some decline in their involvement in serious crime when compared with their earlier offenses, as listed in the Central Registry (before the age of 16). Among the serious offenses, property offenses were still high among boys although not as high as before age 16; improper conduct

table 30

FREQUENCY OF POLICE ARRESTS AFTER AGE 16, 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS WITH POLICE RECORDS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Offenses	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
1	37	64	9	75	46	66
2	11	19	1	8	12	17
3	3	5	2	17	5	7
4 or more	7	12	—	—	7	10
TOTAL	58	100	12	100	70	100

NOTE: Records checked as of March, 1962.

offenses had grown. Among the less-serious offenses of boys, malicious mischief was the most important, constituting the largest single category (29 per cent) of all offenses. Traffic offenses had become important (17 per cent) as might be expected as this male population grew older. Arrests of girls were not meaningful when analyzed by type because of the small numbers involved.

By cross-tabulation of the Central Registry and Police Department records, the sequence of listings can be determined. Almost three-quarters (73 per cent) of the dropouts had never been involved with the law to the extent of a listing with the Central Registry or Police Department. That delinquency once started is not a continuous pattern is demonstrated by the fact that only slightly more than a quarter (26 per cent) of those recorded in the Central Registry were also known in the later Police records. Since those listed in the Central Registry were 20 per cent of all dropouts, only 5 per cent of all dropouts had both a Central Registry and Police Department record. The discontinuity of delinquency is also shown by the surprising fact that almost six of ten dropouts (58 per cent) in the Police records had not been listed earlier in the Central Registry. This finding may be partially explained by the fact that Central Registry information was not available for a few dropouts, those who were 16 or older in 1957.

table 31

TYPES OF OFFENSES AFTER AGE 16, 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS LISTED WITH POLICE DEPARTMENT, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Types of Offenses	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Serious						
Against the person, assault	4	4	—	—	4	3
Property, burglary, larceny	17	17	1	6	18	16
Sex	1	1	—	—	1	1
Weapons	2	2	—	—	2	1
Unlawful entry	1	1	—	—	1	1
Improper conduct	11	11	3	17	14	12
Less Serious						
Disorderly conduct	3	3	5	29	8	7
Malicious mischief	28	29	2	12	30	26
Runaway, warrant	5	5	4	24	9	8
Traffic offenses	17	17	—	—	17	15
Violation of children's court regulations	5	5	—	—	5	4
Witness, questioned	5	5	1	6	6	5
Not ascertained	—	—	1	6	1	1
TOTAL	99	100	17	100	116	100

NOTE: Records checked as of March, 1962.

table 32

POLICE REPORTS AND CENTRAL REGISTRY LISTINGS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Police Record (after age 16)	Central Registry (Prior to Age 16)		Record Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	29	41	70
No	84	411	495
TOTAL	113	452	565

NOTE: The figures in the table are all absolute numbers. Percentages can be computed for the row (the police record situation) or for the column (the central registry situation).

PART IV

FAMILY BACKGROUND AND WELFARE EXPERIENCE

The family background of dropouts exhibits a pattern of heterogeneity. While there is some central tendency, considerable variation exists in the composition of the dropout's family, the occupation of the parents, and the dependence of the family on welfare.

Family Composition

Information on residence patterns, marital status of parents, and number of siblings in the home was mainly obtained from the Syracuse City Directory, supplemented by information from the schools, the Onondaga County Welfare Department, the Syracuse Police Department, and the Central Registry of Juvenile Offenders as well as the Syracuse telephone directory. Since low-income families are known to be under-represented in directories, it is likely that our information is biased toward the under-reporting of the less stable families.

Data on the residence patterns of dropouts are, however, fairly complete since information is lacking on only 7 per cent. Somewhat more than half of all dropouts (56 per cent) lived with both their parents; this was more true of boys than girls (58 per cent to 53 per cent.) This figure is raised to 65 per cent when one includes residence with mother and stepfather and stepmother and father as other types of complete families.

table 33

RESIDENCE PATTERNS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Lives With	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Mother & father	182	58	134	53	316	56
Mother	60	19	41	16	101	18
Father	8	3	7	3	15	3
Mother & stepfather	18	6	21	8	39	7
Stepmother & father	4	1	7	3	11	2
Relatives	6	2	9	4	15	3
Other guardians	7	2	13	5	20	3
Institution	1	.5	2	1	3	.5
Independent	1	.5	1	0	2	.5
Not ascertained	26	8	17	7	43	7
TOTAL	313	100	252	100	565	100

On the other hand, almost one of five lived with their mothers only. Of all dropouts, at least 7 per cent did not live with either parent; there is a sex difference here but it is not statistically significant (10 per cent of girls; 5 per cent of boys). Our study results show a greater frequency of an intact family unit than is assumed in many discussions of dropouts.

The marital status of the parents follows a similar trend. For more than half of the parents, the current marriage is the first marriage (57 per cent); no sex difference appears. Where one excludes the sizeable number of "not determined" (20 per cent of the total) and bases calculations only on those cases where information is available, 71 per cent of our study dropouts lived with parents in a first marriage situation. Here a sex difference occurs: boys were more likely than girls to live in a first marriage situation (73 per cent to 68 per cent).[1] The 11 per cent of dropouts who had one deceased parent suggests that these circumstances were probably conducive to leaving school. Although we lack the data, 11 per cent seems to be a gross over-representation among dropouts of youths who have lost a parent.

table 34

MARITAL STATUS OF PARENTS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX OF DROPOUT, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Marital Status	Parents of boys		Parents of Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
First marriage	181	58	139	55	320	57
Separated, divorced, remarried, unmarried	31	10	31	12	62	11
One parent dead	34	11	30	12	64	11
One parent in institution	3	1	3	1	6	1
Not determined	64	20	49	20	113	20
TOTAL	313	100	252	100	565	100

To broaden the picture of family composition, a summary accounting was made of the number of siblings of the dropouts. A very small number (2 per cent) were only children;[2] an equally small number came from extremely large families (ten or more siblings). Combining families with seven to nine and ten to twelve siblings yields the one fairly large sex difference: 7 per cent of boys and 17 per cent of girls for whom information was available were in these large families. Grouping the data into

[1] It is important to stress, however, that the 20 per cent unknown family situations probably means that stable families are overestimated.

[2] Information is available for only 250 dropouts.

small families (no siblings and one to two siblings) and large families (three or more siblings) revealed that more than half of the dropouts (58 per cent) were in large families containing at least four children.

table 35

NUMBER OF SIBLINGS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX OF DROPOUT, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Siblings	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
None	3	2	2	2	5	2
1-2	59	43	42	37	101	40
3-4	48	35	38	34	86	34
5-6	18	13	11	10	29	12
7-9	8	6	17	15	25	10
10-12	2	1	2	2	4	2
TOTAL	138	100	112	100	250	100

NOTE: Excluded are 175 boys and 140 girls (56 per cent of the total sample) for whom information on number of siblings was not available.

Family and Occupations

Information on parents' occupations was obtainable, mainly from the Syracuse City Directory, for almost half of the parents. Grouping occupations into white-collar and blue-collar classifications indicated that almost one-third (29 per cent) were in white-collar occupations. Fathers were much less likely than mothers to be in white-collar occupations (23 per cent to 44 per cent). (This difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.) The import of these findings is the sizeable number of parents of dropouts who were in non-manual employment.

The occupational distribution of parents of dropouts has been compared with that of the employed Syracuse population. In the case of both men and women, there was about a 20 per cent difference between our study parents and the employed Syracuse labor force who were in white-collar occupations. Parents of dropouts held disproportionately more blue-collar jobs.

A more detailed analysis shows that most of the fathers of dropouts in white-collar occupations were proprietors of stores, restaurants, and diners. Clerical jobs as time-keepers, shippers, and stockroom clerks made up most of the remaining white-collar jobs. The most common blue-collar job was at the operative level, including truck drivers and factory workers. The next most important occupational grouping was that of craftsmen, including mechanics, repairmen, carpenters, and brick masons. There were no occupational differences between fathers of girl and boy dropouts.

table 36

OCCUPATIONS OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Type of Occupation	Fathers		Mothers		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
White collar	78	23	55	44	133	29
Blue collar	257	77	71	56	328	71
TOTAL	335	100	126	100	461	100

$X^2 = 18.50$
$df = 1$
$P < .01$

NOTE: Excluded are those for whom occupation was not ascertained and also mothers who were not in the labor market.

table 37

OCCUPATIONS OF PARENTS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS AND ALL SYRACUSE EMPLOYED, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Occupational Status	(1) Dropout Fathers %	(2) All Syracuse Males Census %	(3) Dropout Mothers %	(4) All Syracuse Females Census %
White collar	23	45	44	65
Blue collar	77	55	56	35
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

NOTE: In columns 2 and 4, percentages refer to employed males and employed females, 14 years old and over, excluding those for whom occupation was not ascertained (about 6 per cent of the employed).

SOURCE: U.S., Bureau of the Census.
U.S. CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING; 1960, CENSUS TRACTS, Final Report PHC (1)—154. (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962), p. 42.

When fathers' occupations are ranked by socio-economic status ratings employing the Duncan scale,[3] the range for the known jobs is from 3 to 90, with the median at 19 and the quartiles at 15 and 45. The distribution is skewed towards the lower end of the scale, as even the higher quartile is below 50. The results indicate that both the educational level required for holding such jobs and the income from them are low in comparison with the national average.

table 38

OCCUPATIONS OF FATHERS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX OF DROPOUT, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Father's Occupation	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Professional, technical, etc.	5	3	5	4	10	3
Managers, officials, proprietors	25	13	16	11	41	12
Clerical and kindred	12	6	9	6	21	6
Sales workers	4	2	2	1	6	2
Craftsmen, foremen, kindred	52	27	41	28	93	28
Operatives and kindred	67	35	53	37	120	36
Private household workers	3	2	2	1	5	2
Service workers	14	8	10	7	24	7
Laborers	8	4	7	5	15	4
TOTAL	190	100	145	100	335	100

NOTE: Information is lacking for 41 per cent of the fathers.

Employed mothers of boy dropouts were more likely to be in white-collar occupations than were mothers of girl dropouts.[4] While almost half of the boys' mothers (49 per cent) were in white-collar jobs, not quite four out of ten (38 per cent) of the girls' mothers had similar jobs. This difference is also mirrored in the higher percentage of girls' mothers in private and service jobs (49 per cent to 38 per cent).

Of those mothers who held white-collar positions, the majority were in clerical occupations. The rest were distributed through such occupations as store and restaurant owners, sales clerks, nurses, and telephone operators. Among blue-collar occupations, service jobs such as maids, waitresses, hospital attendants, and cleaning women were most common.

[3] Albert J. Reiss, Jr., *Occupations and Social Status* (New York: The Free Press, 1961), pp. 263-75.

[4] The sizeable number of "not ascertained" cases should be noted. Cited figures are of the known population.

table 39

OCCUPATIONS OF MOTHERS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX OF DROPOUT, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Mother's Occupation	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Professional	3	4	3	7	6	5
Managers	6	8	3	7	9	7
Clerical	23	29	8	17	31	25
Sales	6	8	3	7	9	7
Craftsmen	1	1	1	2	2	1
Operatives	10	12	5	11	15	12
Private household	11	13	9	19	20	16
Service	20	25	14	30	34	27
TOTAL	80	100	46	100	126	100

NOTE: Excluded are those mothers who were not in the labor market or whose occupations were not ascertained.

Moving from job type to the industry in which the parent works, fathers were most likely to be in manufacturing (38 per cent). Wholesale and retail trade (20 per cent) and transportation (14 per cent) were the only other important industries. Agriculture, communication, and entertainment employed very few fathers of dropouts. More specifically, the employing industries in manufacturing were: electrical machinery, miscellaneous machinery, motor vehicle equipment, and blast furnaces. In wholesale and retail trade, food stores were the main industry involved, along with eating and drinking establishments. In the transportation and related fields, trucking and railroads were about equally important in the numbers of fathers they employed.

The occupational patterns of employed mothers of dropouts differed from that of fathers. Mothers were highest in wholesale and retail trade while manufacturing was in second place. Personal services and professional services were in third and fourth positions. Employed mothers, then, were distributed over a wider range of industries than fathers. No mothers were employed in agriculture, construction, utilities, and sanitation, or entertainment. The only striking differences between the mothers of boy and girl dropouts were in (1) the much higher percentage of mothers of girls than of boys employed in personal and professional services (32 per cent to 15 per cent); and (2) the 13 per cent of mothers of boy

table 40

INDUSTRIES OF FATHERS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX OF DROPOUT, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Father's Industry	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Agriculture	—	—	1	1	1	.5
Construction	15	7	11	7	26	7
Manufacturing	69	34	72	43	141	38
Transportation	25	12	26	16	51	14
Communication	2	1	—	—	2	.5
Utilities and sanitation	6	3	—	—	6	2
Finance, insurance, real estate	6	3	4	2	10	2
Business and repair	6	3	4	2	10	2
Wholesale and retail trade	43	21	30	18	73	20
Entertainment	1	1	2	1	3	1
Professional	12	6	7	4	19	5
Public administration	7	4	7	4	14	4
Personal services	10	5	3	2	13	4
TOTAL	202	100	167	100	369	100

NOTE: Excluded are 196 fathers for whom industry-where-employed was not ascertained.

dropouts in public employment. No mothers of girl dropouts were in this category.

Studying industrial classifications in greater detail reveals that food stores in the wholesale and retail trade categories furnished the greatest employment for mothers. The most frequent employers in manufacturing were makers of machinery and office machines. Of the remaining industries, hospitals were the most important sources of employment.

Families and Public Assistance

More than four of ten families of dropouts (42 per cent) were receiving or had received assistance from the Onondaga County Welfare Department. In some instances, this had occurred as early as 1936. This figure is probably an underestimate in that names of parents were not always available and identification might have been incomplete. It is possible that more complete information would push this figure to 50 per cent. Adding assistance from private social work agencies, including religious organizations, would perhaps increase to two-thirds the number receiving or who had received assistance.

table 41

INDUSTRIES OF MOTHERS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX OF DROPOUT, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Mother's Industry	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Manufacturing	21	23	15	28	36	25
Transportation	2	2	—	—	2	1
Wholesale and retail	32	36	18	34	50	35
Finance, insurance, and real estate	7	8	3	6	10	7
Business and repair	3	3	—	—	3	2
Personal services	8	9	8	15	16	11
Professional	5	6	9	17	14	10
Public administration	12	13	—	—	12	9
TOTAL	90	100	53	100	143	100

NOTE: Excluded are 422 mothers who were not employed or for whom industry-where-employed was not ascertained.

Girls' families were more likely to require assistance than boys': almost one-half of the families of girl dropouts (49 per cent) and one-third of the families of boy dropouts (36 per cent) had received or were receiving assistance from the County Welfare Department. These sex differences are statistically significant.

The degree of complexity of family assistance has been estimated by noting whether one or more cases[5] were involved in each assistance family. The greater the number of cases within the family, the higher the complexity. Two-thirds of the families receiving assistance had complex situations involving two or more cases. Again, girls had a more difficult situation in that a higher percentage of their families (71 per cent) had complex welfare circumstances than was true of boys' families (62 per cent).

The current status of welfare cases as of spring 1962 has been classified as active, recently closed, and closed in the past. About one-quarter of the cases were active, with no differences in this regard between families of girl and boy dropouts. Combining active cases with those recently closed points out the importance of welfare in current circumstances of dropout families, since only 27 per cent of all welfare cases were of an early period (1939-1956).

[5] The term "case" refers to one type of welfare assistance, such as home relief or aid to dependent children. A family may have received more than one type of assistance, and at different times in the family career.

Fifteen dropouts (eight boys and seven girls) were receiving welfare assistance for a child of their own. Other dropouts were classified as having their own cases but these did not seem to involve a third generation.

While deprivation and dependency do not affect all dropouts, they do appear to have major importance for a sizeable proportion of dropouts, especially girls.

table 42

ONONDAGA COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENT STATUS OF FAMILIES OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1936-1962

Status of Family	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Welfare	114	36	124	49	238	42
Non-welfare	199	64	128	51	327	58
TOTAL	313	100	252	100	565	100

$X^2 = 9.36$
$df = 1$
$P < .01$

table 43

FREQUENCY OF WELFARE CASES, FAMILIES OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1936-1962

Cases	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
One	43	38	36	29	79	33
More than one	71	62	88	71	159	67
TOTAL	114	100	124	100	238	100

table 44

CURRENT STATUS OF WELFARE CASES, FAMILIES OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Current Status of Case	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Active	28	24	34	27	62	26
Closed, recent (1957-Spring, 1962)	51	45	60	48	111	47
Closed, past (1939-1956)	35	31	30	25	65	27
TOTAL	114	100	124	100	238	100

CONCLUSIONS

Young people who left the Syracuse schools in the school year 1959-1960 without having graduated were the subjects of this survey of records. The aim was to gain an initial perspective of the school dropout: who he is; behavior in school; his job experience after leaving school. The current concern about the high dropout frequency in the United States has led to an increase in the amount of money spent on persuasive programs urging young people to stay in school, and on "rehabilitation" programs for dropouts who are already on the labor market. The kind of initial perspective offered in this report is, therefore, essential to the guiding of these finances into the most efficient and effective channels.

The findings of this survey have disproven a few common notions about dropouts. First, the dropout rate in Syracuse is small when compared to the national rate. Only 54 out of every 1,000 students enrolled in the city schools in the fall of 1959 had left before the end of the school year. Although even a small number of dropouts can be a problem, the problem is not the same in magnitude or in kind as in other cities. There is a need to recognize that each city has its own problems, and no single program dealing with dropouts will be effective in all cities.

It is frequently thought that students who do not graduate from school are not mentally capable of doing the academic work required. Although the data obtained on IQ scores are limited, approximately two-thirds of those dropouts who were given scores should not have had difficulty in school; that is, they had IQ scores of 90 or better. The mean IQ was 92.8; this is not much below the national mean. Since it would be expected that dropouts might be more hostile to tests of any kind and less motivated than other students, the fact that they did not score much lower than the national mean is important. Perhaps what seems to be an academic difficulty may actually be a manifestation of other, undetermined problems.

Although the dropout may not be able to secure a desirable job, he does not automatically become a social problem in terms of repeated delinquencies and anti-social acts. Only slightly more than one-quarter (27 per cent) of the youth in this survey had any contact with law enforcing agencies, and the majority of the offenses committed were not serious.

A few statements can be made about the dropout group as a whole. Most of them were 16 or 17 years old when they left school, and most left during the first three years of high school. Almost four-fifths of them were at least one year retarded in school. In fact, retardation in grade level was the one characteristic common to such a large proportion of the dropouts.

More than 40 per cent of the families of the dropouts had received public welfare assistance at some time. Since this is probably an underestimation of total assistance received from all welfare agencies, and since many more families have just managed to live on a very low income, it could be said that the majority of dropouts come from relatively poor families. This statement is supported by evidence that most of the parents had low prestige and low skilled jobs.

Neither do all dropouts come from broken homes. While a large number (at least 23 per cent) had experienced a situation where at least one parent was not in the home, more than half were living with both of their natural parents. Of course, even where both parents were living together there may have been a great deal of upsetting friction, but even in such atmospheres some children manage to succeed.

There is one very obvious differentiation to make: boy dropouts are different from girl dropouts. Boys are more likely to leave school before graduation than are girls. When they do leave, boys are older than girls and they are also more retarded in grade level. An explanation for these differences might be that more pressures are put upon the boys to stay in school since their expected role is to support a family in a financially adequate way, and education is necessary to do so. Some parents, on the other hand, may consider education a waste of time for a girl whose expected role is to be a housewife and mother, tasks which presumably require no formal education.

Work permit and New York State Employment Service data cannot indicate how many of the dropouts were successful in finding jobs. Only 26 per cent of the group had obtained work permits and less than 10 per cent were placed by the State Employment Service. These data do tell us, however, that when the dropout did secure a job it was of low skill and undoubtedly of low pay. Relatively few industries in the city hired these young people. While girls seem to be better off in that they are more likely to secure white-collar jobs, these jobs are mostly clerk positions in lower-priced department stores. Wages for such jobs are not much above legal minimum hourly wages. Girls probably do not fare any better in the labor market than do the boys.

It is expected that future studies of school dropouts will go beyond the mere survey of records. Much more intensive and probing analyses are needed. Surveys of records cannot be completely disparaged, however; it is important that a few common notions have been dispelled, at least for one city, and that a beginning has been made into a recognition of differences among dropouts. And where a social problem has grown to such a magnitude that there is a widespread concern and desire for action, whatever tools and information available for understanding the problem must be used. It is hoped that this survey will be somewhat of a guide to those who plan more intensive studies of the problem toward the eventual goal of effective social planning.

APPENDIX

Study Procedure

The present survey of students who dropped from schools in Syracuse during 1959-1960 was designed to use whatever data could be processed rapidly. It is a survey in a variety of dimensions, not a study in depth, and the focus is on the group rather than the individual.

Seven main sources were used in collecting record material on the dropouts:

1. School records
2. Records at the New York State Employment Service
3. County Welfare Department records
4. Work permits filed at the Syracuse Board of Education
5. Syracuse Armed Forces Examination Station records
6. Syracuse Central Registry of Juvenile Offenders
7. Identification Bureau of the Syracuse Police Department.

The first step in delimiting the dropout population was to secure from the Board of Education a list of all students who left school during 1959-1960. This list included the address, birthdate, sex, grade, school attended and date of dropout for each student.

The next step was to visit the junior and senior public high schools in the city in order to check the records of each of these students. (The parochial schools were not visited, because only a very small number of students dropped out of these schools.) The school records surveyed were the registration cards for 1959-1960, recent senior yearbooks, commencement lists, and the report cards, health records, attendance records, test scores and individual guidance folders. A variety of material was copied from these records. Address, birthdate, school and dropout date, as given in the original list, were checked with school records. Birthplace, residence changes, telephone number, number of siblings and occupations and educations of the parents were noted when available. Also noted was any information which might pertain to the dropout situation, such as age at dropout, reason for dropping out, attendance behavior, grade attained, marks, extracurricular activities, intelligence test scores and other test scores, school transfers, job aspirations, and adjustment in school. Because information on all of these items was not consistently available, not all are included in this report.

In checking the original list at the schools it was found that some of the children on the list could not be termed dropouts. Some were taking post-graduate study; some had moved out of town and had transferred to other schools, and some were enough under the earliest legal leaving-age to be classified as having interrupted their education rather than having stopped school. These names were eliminated from the study. In addition, from the records of the schools and other agencies it was learned that some of the dropouts had received further training in night school, summer school, or day school or had been sent to the Marcy State Hospital or the State Agricultural and Industrial School (for child offenders). Records were kept on these students (81 in all), but they were not included in

the present report. Those who entered the armed services were, however, included.

While eliminating some of the names from the original list, others were added, if, according to school records, a dropout seemed to have occurred and the name was not on the first list.

The final list of dropouts was taken to the New York State Employment Service and checked against their records. If a student had registered with the Service, information on number of contacts, job classification, testing and counseling procedures, number of referrals and number of placements were recorded.

The staff of the County Welfare Department noted for us whether or not the family of each dropout had ever received public assistance, the kind of assistance and the dates when assistance was received. In addition they reported the number of children in each family and the occupations of the parents.

The Board of Education maintains a file of all work permits secured by youth in the city, and they made this file available to the researchers. From these records it was possible to check certain background data on the dropouts, such as health, birthdate and parents' names, as well as number of jobs obtained with work permits, the types of jobs, date employed, place of employment and hours worked.

The Syracuse Armed Forces Examination Station checked our list of dropouts for any who were admitted to the armed services since January, 1961. The date of entry and the branch of service were recorded.

The Syracuse Central Registry maintains a file on all juvenile offenders since 1957. If a dropout was listed in this office, the offenses he was involved in, the dates of the offenses, and the dispositions were recorded. A similar procedure was used at the Identification Bureau of the Syracuse Police Department where adult offenses are recorded.

The Syracuse City Directories of 1958, 1959 and 1960 were used to check the addresses and occupations of the parents of the dropouts.

Data gathered from these various sources were recorded on 5 x 8 cards and later coded and punched on IBM cards for processing.

Limitations of Data

Gathering survey data from records poses many problems. First of all, the records were not designed to answer the questions which the researchers wanted to ask. For instance, it would have been desirable to know how long the jobs which were obtained with work permits were held, but this could not be ascertained. Another problem was that sometimes data were not consistently available. Information on intelligence test scores was available for only 236 of the dropouts. In such instances, interpretation of the available data is difficult, for a bias is probably present, but one is not always sure in what direction. A similar difficulty in interpretation exists when records are not available for a certain period of time. The Central Registry records dated only from 1957 and the armed services list from 1961.

Choosing to study dropouts who left schcol two years before the research investigation also led to some problems. After a period of time some offices destroy their records. This happened with some of the cards at the New York State Employment Service; at the Board of Education work permits obtained before 1957 were stored in the basement and were not available. At the schools there had been several changes in guidance counselors during the two years, and this meant that sometimes a guidance counselor was not familiar with the dropouts from that school and did not have records on them.

Where the student reported information on himself, as at the Police Department or in some of the guidance folders, care must be taken in the use of the data.

The researchers' lack of familiarity with certain record-keeping procedures may have led to errors in some cases. It was not always easy to understand the various report cards found in the schools, and the legal terminology for offenses and dispositions found in Police Department records may at times have been misinterpreted.

While recognizing the limitations of the data and the need for more intensive studies, it is hoped that this survey can serve as an initial step in describing the dropout population, in determining how the dropout fits into the community, and in understanding the dropout process.

Appendix table A

JOB REFERRALS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS BY THE NEW YORK STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1961

Number of Referrals	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
None	44	36	29	38	73	37
1	22	18	16	21	38	19
2	14	12	6	8	20	10
3	9	7	4	5	13	6
4	2	2	2	2	4	2
5	5	4	1	1	6	3
6 or more	4	3	3	4	7	4
Not ascertained	22	18	16	21	38	19
TOTAL REGISTERED	122	100	77	100	199	100

Appendix table B

JOB PLACEMENTS OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS BY THE NEW YORK STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE, BY SEX, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1961

Number of Placements	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
None	71	58	43	56	114	57
1	18	15	12	15	30	15
2	7	5	3	4	10	5
3	2	2	3	4	5	3
4 or 5	2	2	—	—	2	1
Not ascertained	22	18	16	21	38	19
TOTAL REGISTERED	122	100	77	100	199	100

Appendix table C

REGISTRATION OF 1959-1960 SCHOOL DROPOUTS WITH THE NEW YORK STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE BY REASON FOR DROPPING OUT, SYRACUSE, N. Y., 1959-1961

NYSES REGISTRATION	DROPOUT REASON (SCHOOL RECORDS)								TOTAL	
	Available for Work				Not Available for Work (married, service, ill, etc.)		No Reason (left, suspended, didn't return, etc.)			
	Work		Age							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	60	37	30	29	24	33	85	37	199	35
No	102	63	72	71	48	67	144	63	366	65
TOTAL	162	100	102	100	72	100	229	100	565	100